Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-13. Cancelled.

14. (Previously Presented) A method for reducing the oxygen concentration in a modified atmosphere package, comprising:

(a) placing an oxygen scavenging packet in the package, said oxygen scavenging packet comprising:

(i) a plurality of side walls defining an enclosed space; and

(ii) an oxygen absorber within the enclosed space, said oxygen absorber comprising iron, silica gel, a carbon dioxide generator, and an electrolyte, said iron is electrolytically annealed and reduced, said electrolyte is chosen from the group consisting of acids and salts, said silica gel is impregnated with said carbon dioxide generator;

(b) introducing a liquid oxygen uptake accelerator comprising water directly onto said oxygen absorber; and

(c) immediately sealing the modified atmosphere package;

wherein the amount of liquid oxygen uptake accelerator which is introduced into said packet is from about 0.2 mL to about 0.8 mL for each 2.5 grams of iron.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein said oxygen uptake accelerator is present in said packet in an amount from about 0.3 ml to about 0.7 ml per approximately 2.5 grams of said iron.

16-18. Cancelled.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein said oxygen uptake accelerator is contained within a frangible capsule and further including rupturing said tangible capsule such that the oxygen uptake accelerator is introduced directly onto said oxygen absorber.

20-22. Cancelled.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[22]], 14 wherein said acid is acetic acid or citric acid.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[22]], 14 wherein said salt is a metal salt.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, wherein said salt is a copper salt.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[22]], 14 wherein said salt is selected from the group consisting of NaCl, $CaCl_2$, and $MgCl_2$.

27. Cancelled.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein said packet further comprises means for introducing said liquid oxygen uptake accelerator directly onto the oxygen absorber.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein introducing said oxygen uptake accelerator directly onto said oxygen absorber includes injecting said oxygen uptake accelerator onto said oxygen absorber.

30-31. Cancelled.

32. (Previously Presented) A method for minimizing metmyoglobin formation in fresh meat which is contained within a modified atmosphere package, comprising:

(a) placing an oxygen scavenging packet in the package, said oxygen scavenging packet comprising:

(i) a plurality of side walls defining an enclosed space; and

(ii) an oxygen absorber within the enclosed space, said oxygen absorber comprising iron, silica gel, a carbon dioxide generator, an electrolyte, and an acid, said iron is electrolytically annealed and reduced, said electrolyte is chosen from the group consisting of acids and salts;

(b) introducing a liquid oxygen uptake accelerator comprising water directly onto said oxygen absorber; and

(c) immediately sealing the modified atmosphere package;

wherein the amount of liquid oxygen uptake accelerator which is introduced into said packet is from about 0.2 mL to about 0.8 mL for each 2.5 grams of iron.

33-36. Cancelled.

37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32, wherein said oxygen uptake accelerator is contained within a frangible capsule and further including rupturing said frangible capsule such that the oxygen uptake accelerator is introduced directly onto said oxygen absorber.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32, wherein said oxygen uptake accelerator is contained within a bibulous wick, wherein said wick extends from the exterior of said packet, through at least one of said plurality of side walls and into said enclosed space.

39. Cancelled.

40. Cancelled.

41. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[40]], 32 wherein said acid is acetic acid or citric acid.

42. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[40]], 32 wherein said salt is a metal salt.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 42, wherein said salt is a copper salt.

44. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[40]], 32 wherein said salt is selected from the group consisting of NaCl, $CaCl_2$, and $MgCl_2$.

45. Cancelled.

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32, wherein said packet further comprises means for introducing said liquid oxygen uptake accelerator directly onto the oxygen absorber.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32, wherein introducing said oxygen uptake accelerator directly onto said oxygen absorber includes injecting said oxygen uptake accelerator onto said oxygen absorber.

48. Cancelled.

49. Cancelled.